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REV. DR. CHOULES'

SERMON

ON THE DEATH OF THE

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER.

A

SERMON,

UPON THE DEATH OF THE

HON. DANIEL WEBSTER,

DELIVERED IN THE NORTH BAPTIST CHURCH, NEWPORT, R. I.

NOVEMBER 21, 1852.

BY

J. O. CHOULES.

NEW YORK:
EVANS & BRITTAN.
1852.

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CRANSTON & NORMAN, PR., NEWPORT, R. I.

SERMON.

1 Samuel xxv: 1. "*And Samuel died, and all the Israelites were gathered together and lamented him, and buried him in his house at Ramah.*"

One of our Puritan Fathers remarked that it was "a hard thing to funeral it well." We find Moses praying for Heavenly wisdom, that he might meditate upon mortality when God issued the decree of death upon the whole generation of Israel, that came out of Egypt as a punishment for their sin. The present is no ordinary occasion.—God has taught us by his providence, and you hear his voice crying, "Earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord."

A few weeks ago this sanctuary was crowded, while I endeavored to improve the nation's loss in the removal of her patriot statesman, Henry Clay, and you will remember that then I comforted you, and cheered my own mind, with the thought, that the nation could turn, amid all its bereavement, to her favorite son, the defender of the Constitution;—but as if God would teach us that vain is the help of man, we are here again summoned to mourn the mighty, the wise, the prudent, and the eloquent man, for Webster, the earthly stayand staff of his country is no more. He, in whose world-wide fame, the Union gloried, is in the embrace of death.

The text challenges our attention to the death of a great and good man.

1. *A great and good man is dead.* "*Samuel died.*" *It* is appointed unto man once to die." I need not stop long to

names in our national heraldry. They were nobility of God's own creation—but they are gone.

They bury Samuel at his own abode in Ramah—where he lived and ruled, and loved and was beloved, there let the prophet's dust be laid. there let the Israelites gather together, and let their piety be encouraged, and their nationality animated, at the grave of departed worth and excellence. There, where God had so often spoken to his servant, there let his flesh rest in hope and wait his waking voice, for he though dead shall live again. God who called him in childhood, again and again, shall yet once more address his faithful servant, and call him forth from the dust and darkness of the grave, to a new and more glorious existence; when instead of being a prophet, he shall be a king and priest unto God.

I shall not be guilty of the vain attempt to circumscribe a survey of the intellectual powers and the public career of the departed patriot within the limits of a discourse. I do not feel that this is the time, or fitting occasion, to record or even sketch his mighty acts. They are written in men's memories—they are to constitute the proudest pages of our country's history. I have no inclination, amid the grief of our national bereavement, to aim at any thing beyond a retrospect of the memorable death scenes of the great statesman, record some recollections of my own intercourse with him, and offer some reflections adapted to secure our profit.

Whatever Daniel Webster was, belongs to the United States. To use the language of Mr. Burke in his pathetic lamentation for his son, "*He was a public creature;*" for more than half the period of our existence as a nation. He was, (to accommodate the language of John Quincy Adams, employed in an eulogy upon Canning,) "American through and through; American in his feelings, American in his aims, American in his policy and projects. The influence, the grandeur, the dominion of America were the dreams of his boyhood, and the intense effort of his riper years. For this he valued power, and for this he used it." From his first appearance at Wash-

ington, his public career was a series of triumphs. It was truly said of him that the "north had not his equal, and the south had not his superior." To discharge the duty of his position, to satisfy the claims and expectations of the land, and above all to satisfy his own conscience; Mr. Webster lived intensely—lived in the eye of the world, the pride of his own country and the admiration of all lands; But—

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
With all beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour,
The paths of glory lead but to the grave.—"

The full age of man had been accorded to Mr. Webster, and then the silver cord began to show signs of loosening. There came at first uncertain rumours, indefinite intelligence that the great statesman's health was in a precarious condition. Apprehensions at length became mingled with alarm, and doubts darkened into certainty. Still he had not abandoned the helm of the ship of State; it was known that he held it in his mighty grasp; his skill was daily exhibited, but the life of labor was over, the evening of repose had set in; he was walking through the valley of the shadow of death but he feared no evil, the rod and the staff were there to support the pilgrim, beat down his enemies, and point out his way. The springs of life were freezing at their source, and they no longer revivify and strengthen. Yet amid the wreck of matter, that wondrous world of intellect retains its lustre, and seems even more brilliant from the perishing condition of the casket that enshrines it.

"The soul's dark cottage battered and decayed,
Lets in new light through chinks that time has made."

Still gleams that eye of magic power, still flows in weakness, tones of melody sweet as woman's voice, still the wan features are irradiated with the smiles of passing majesty and beauty, as the exquisite forms upon certain vases, are only visible when lighted from within. He knows he is passing through the dark valley, "but the lamp of his love is his light

through the gloom." I see no terror, no alarm in that chamber of death, the room is full of the light of the Lord, it is a holy, hallowed atmosphere. The end of life was in perfect harmony with its course. Day by day was filled up with duty. Calm and serene, while all around were deeply agitated, he continued to serve his country, received and answered letters, and gave directions for the daily management of his farm.

I love to think of that great man, mingling his discharge of life's business with the utterance of deep religious sentiments, O, it was nature speaking naturally and grace speaking graciously. Flesh and heart are failing, but he comforts his friends and speaks of his country and her welfare. The waters of death cannot drown the warm affections of that princely heart. "Harvey! I am not so sick but that I know you, I am well enough to know you, and well enough to call down the richest of heaven's blessings upon you and yours. Harvey! don't leave me till I am dead—don't leave Marshfield till I am a dead man!" Harvey! mortal man cannot be more richly endowed, and as far as our language shall be spread or spoken, this shall be thy memorial, thou faithful friend! Listen! let the great ones of the earth listen to a slow sepulchral voice from the death bed of Webster. "*On the 24th October all that is mortal of Daniel Webster will be no more.*" But he gazed through the gloom of the grave, to the glory that lies beyond, for he prays, and closes his petition with "Heavenly Father forgive my sins and receive me to thyself through Jesus Christ." Every mind alive to beauty has loved to dwell on Gray's elegy in a country Church yard, but henceforth its lines shall be sacred household words, for the dying moments of our patriot were charmed by their melody. I bless God that the good physician at his side, knew words of wondrous power to charm; and when the dying sufferer talked of the difficulty of dying, Dr. Jeffries whispered, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." The prompt reply

was, "the fact, the fact, that is what I want, thy rod, thy staff—thy staff." The last words of the dying man were, on waking up to consciousness, "*I still live.*" Prophetic, significant, immortal testimony; yes, he will live—greatly live—not only as a redeemed spirit where death is known no more, but as a spiritual presence in our land, a guardian watcher, whose words of wondrous wisdom shall be read by childhood, and valued by all true manhood, so long as that Union lasts, which he cemented by his self-sacrifice. There rests upon that couch, the mortal remains of the greatest man our country ever called her son.—peace his pillow, and piety his guardian angel.—

"So rests the eagle on the rocky steep
Of Kilda's isle, amidst the roaring deep;
The tempest rages and the billows pour
Their foam and fury on the echoing shore.
Meanwhile he sits in undisturbed repose,
His eye with fire, his heart with courage glows.
He looks in joy, majestic port assumes,
Views the dread wrath, and careless trims his plumes.
Claps his strong wings, exulting in his might,
And mingles with the storm in steady flight!"

Let us turn from the chamber where the good man dies, to the last solemn offices of affection and respect. Grand simplicity is to be witnessed in the closing up of the sad scene. "Let there be no pomp—no ceremony. Let my own minister, the village pastor, perform the services." But can those services be observed in privacy? The Elect Ruler of the land understood the case, when with equal truth and beauty he declared, "that the heart of the nation throbs heavily at the portals of the grave." It was kindly ordered that the noble, large hearted man should die in his own house, amid scenes he loved so well, and surrounded by those who loved, honored and admired him. The home which he had garnished and adorned, the home of his cherished affections, shall be his resting place, when tired nature's course is run.

And all Israel gathered around his sepulchre. Never before was such a spectacle witnessed in our day. Far away from the crowded city, miles off from the iron track, on the wild sea shore, thousands upon thousands are assembling and deep solemnity reigns over the gathered masses. Friends were there who never expect to feel such another loss, and they too, were there as mourners, who had not manifested love by recent acts, now that he had gone where human love and hatred can reach him never more, they too would drop tears upon his ashes, and shout his praises. They who had quarreled with Samuel in his life time, would come and help to bury him at Ramah, as if he had manifested some merit in dying off. Poor human nature!—I could not avoid imagining that thinking men were talking to themselves something like this, "The calamity is greater to him that survives than to him that dies. The effects of this calamity are beyond all the powers of calculation to reach. When a great and excellent man dies, the chief part of what he was, (at least so far as the world is concerned,) perishes. It is very little of him that survives in his memory and works. The use and application of his experience, the counsels he could give, the firmness and sagacity with which he could have executed what he might have thus counselled, are gone. He had accumulated great stores of learning; by long exercise he had refined his taste, he had collected facts, he had drawn the most curious conclusions. You might converse with this man incessantly for a year, and might learn from him every day. How many parts of his skill never came forward as topics of conversation, and what extensive powers of learning and observation existed in him, that were never poured out upon others." Such thoughts filled men's minds as they walked the mansion of the dead. Men felt that it was "impossible to calculate how much of good perishes, when a great and good man dies."*

* Goodwin's Essay on Sepulchres

"So when the pilgrim sun is journeying o'er
Some western hill to illume a distant shore,
And all the landscape darkens into night,
We mourn his setting, but we bless his light!"

Seldom has God crowned a long life of usefulness with more signal honor at death. Official rank and dignity, religion, learning, virtue, wealth and honest industry, all crowded to witness death's most glorious and memorable conquest. Men will never forget the scene when the great Secretary was carried from his mansion to the chamber of the grave. There in that modest, noble mansion, were the chosen companions of his retired moments, the productions of the great and good of every age and clime. From that tranquil spot where he had so often held high converse with the mighty dead, and communion with the Father of spirits, who gave to men their living souls, he was brought forth to lie beneath the canopy of the bright heavens, under the shade of his beloved trees. The sun shone out in highest splendor, the air was balm, and every breeze of Heaven, as it swept decaying foliage on the bier, inculcated the solemn lesson, that "we all do fade as a leaf." And millions sympathised in the emotions of that assemblage, for the news, lightning winged, had pervaded the continent; and in the beautiful language of Mr. John C. Park, "the fisherman on the banks pauses in his toil to echo back the wail which reaches him from the shore; and the trapper in the valleys of the Rocky Mountains, catches it as it rolls across the prairies."

The funeral services were simple, truthful and affecting. When that procession formed, and I saw the desolate family, the afflicted household, the mourning friends and neighbors, I thought that it was a funeral becoming a patriarch. It was in harmony with the character of the place where pilgrim fathers slept—so once they buried Abraham, and so did our forefathers bury Brewster, Winslow and others, of whom the world was not worthy. There they buried our nation's stay and staff, and the deep blue sea he loved so well shall sing

his requiem, till the mighty One shall stand upon the sea and upon the dry land, and declare that Time shall be no longer.

> "Trial and toil were o'er;
> Anguish and hate, and the withering scowl
> Of hot-tongued malice, and anger's howl,
> Were still as the dead sea shore—
> O fame! this was thy victor hour,
> Earn'd not by spear or arm of power,
> Nor bloody wreath, nor crimson brand—
> Curses and glory hand in hand."

An acquaintance of more than twenty-five years has enabled me to form some just idea of the departed. I have always regarded him as a christian man, and the fact is singular, though melancholy, that many who were his malignant revilers in life, acknowledge his excellence at death. I rest my cheerful conviction of his piety upon personal knowledge. I fully unite with the Rev. Mr. Alden, in his opinion expressed in his funeral oration, that the delineation which Mr. Webster gave of one of his early and noble compeers "could never have been written, except from an experimental acquaintance with that which he holds up as the chief excellence of his friend." "Political eminence and professional fame fade away and die with all things earthly. Nothing of character is really permanent but virtue and personal worth, these remain. Whatever of excellence is wrought into the soul itself, belongs to both worlds. Religion does not attach itself merely to this life, it points to another world. Professional or political reputation cannot last forever, but a conscience void of offence towards God and man, is an inheritance for eternity. Religion is the tie that connects man with his Creator, and holds him to his throne. If that great tie be all sundered, all broken, he floats away a worthless atom in the universe; its proper attraction all gone, its destiny thwarted, and its whole future nothing but desolation, darkness and death. A man with no sense of religious duty is he whom the scriptures describe in such true but terrible language, as "living without

God in the world." Such a man is out of his proper being, out of the circle of all his duties, out of the circle of all his happiness, and away, far, far away from the purposes of his creation.

"A mind like Mr. Mason's, active, thoughtful, penetrating, sedate, could not but meditate deeply on the condition of man below, and feel its responsibilities. He could not look on this mighty system,

"This universal frame thus wondrous fair,"

without feeling that it was created and upheld by an intelligence, to which all other intelligence must be responsible. I am bound to say that in the course of my life, I never met with an individual, in any profession or condition of life, who always spoke, and always thought, with such awful reverence of the power and presence of God."

"No irreverence, no lightness, even no too familiar allusion to God and his attributes ever escaped his lips. The very notion of a Supreme Being, was with him made up of awe and solemnity. It filled the whole of his great mind with the strongest emotions. A man like him, with all his proper sentiments and sensibilities alive in him, must, in this state of existence, have something to believe and something to hope for; or else, as life is advancing to its close and parting, all is heart-sinking and oppression. Depend upon it, whatever may be the mind of an old man, old age is only really happy, when, on feeling the enjoyments of this world pass away, it begins to lay a stronger hold on those of another."

"Mr. Mason's religious sentiments and feelings were the crowning glories of his character."

Such a man could not be reckless or thoughtless, and they who knew him best, knew that God was in all his thoughts; the God of nature in his works filling him with loftiest admiration, the God of providence ordering all his daily steps, and the God of grace speaking to him in the volume of a father's love.

Many years ago—1834, in passing through the Sound, we occupied the Captain's state-room. At night Mr. Webster took up my bible and read the 23d Psalm, and then made some fine remarks upon the character of David, observing that the varied experience of David as a shepherd boy—a King, victorious and vanquished, had made him acquainted with all the diversified feelings of human nature, and had thus qualified him to be the chorister of the church, in all future ages. After this, he asked me to commend ourselves to God, remarking that none needed prayer more than "the wayfaring man." That evening I asked Mr. Webster if his religious views were those of the Orthodox Congregationalists, with whom I had heard that he united in early life. "Yes," he said, "he thought that he had never changed his religious opinions, that he regarded Jonathan Edwards as being as nearly the stamp of truth as any mere human writer. He spoke of his history, of Redemption as having greatly interested him, and added, "but I prefer to find truth as it is conveyed to us in the word, without system, yet so clear and lucid." In regard to the atonement, he expressed the most abiding confidence, observing that it seemed to him the great peculiarity of the gospel, to deny which was to reduce it to a level with other systems of religion. He observed that he had "no taste for metaphysical refinement in theology, and preferred plain statements of truth." He thought the pulpit had much to answer for in producing differences of opinion among christians, and expressed his belief that the best and safest way to oppose all sorts of error was the plain enunciation of the truth. In this conversation I was much impressed with the remark, "I take the Bible to be inspired, and it must not be treated as though it merely *contained* a revelation; *it is a revelation.*" "You ministers make a great mistake in not dwelling more upon the great *facts* of christianity, they are the foundations of the system, and there is a power connected with their statement; it seems to me that Peter and Paul understood this. Plain preaching is what we all want, and as much il-

lustration as you can bring up. I once heard Dr. Beecher, in Hanover street, Boston, talk for an hour on God's law, in its application to the heart and life; he did it, in my idea of good preaching."

In 1840, at Washington, walking home from church, after I had been preaching, the conversation turned upon the great lights of the 17th century in England, Mr. Webster remarked, "Barrow and Taylor are my favorites, although so different in their style. Howe's living temple is grandeur itself. Charnock must have been a capital preacher, his discourses on the attributes are very solemn. Bishop Horsley is the greatest polemic of the church; there seems to me no escape from his grappling irons. It will not do to say that he was an infidel; no infidel could write as he does." Mr. Webster said that he thought Robert Hall the best writer of the age, but he admired Foster's essay on Popular Ignorance, as the best book of the day for thought. Last February I dined with Mr. Webster, in New York, upon the Sabbath day. He had been hearing Dr. Hawks, and spoke in commendation of the earnestness of the discourse, and pointing across the Park to the brick church, said "there I always hear capital sermons from Dr. Spring, always full of strong sense and simple piety." After dinner there was an immense procession going through Broadway, in honor of a murderer who had been executed on Friday. Mr. Webster gazed at the vast assemblage, and observed, "that, sir, is a terrible sight, I have rarely seen any thing more shocking; but they are foreigners, their children will become good citizens, education and religion will do every thing for them."

On handing Mr. Webster a copy of Neal's History of the Puritans, which I had edited with notes, he said, "You have bestowed your time well. These Puritans made our country what it is. I love to think of them, and down at Marshfield I love to gaze over at Plymouth and live their sufferings over in thought. O, what men they were, what they endured and sacrificed! How much they must have suffered at Leyden

among a strange people. They loved the truth and it made them free." I asked, What do you think, sir, of Laud? "Why," said Mr. Webster, "the wonder to me is, not that they cut off his head, but that they did not give him company from the bench." In relation to Charles 1st, Mr. Webster observed, "to call Charles a martyr, degrades my ideas of martyrdom. certainly his road to that distinction was one of chicanery and deception."

At a dinner party in Boston, Mr. Webster stated that he had been reading "Burton's Diary," and that it was a mine of great value. "There you get the true calibre of the Roundheads; their speeches in Parliament were really wonderful productions, and I am satisfied that their discussions about religion, were mainly in view of the great civil consequences involved. The men of that day were richly furnished; look at Cowley, Evelyn, and Clarendon, on one side, and Elliot, Sydney, Milton, Harrington, and Marvel on the other. These men all breathed in gardens, and kept up their humanity by meditations amidst the tranquility of nature. Cromwell and Hampden were *the men*. Cromwell was a statesman every inch. Hampden is a man of whom I want to know more than Lord Nugent has told us; I want to know how he talked and lived every day down in the country. A proper history or biography is the story of a life; mere public facts do not make a biography. I want to know not only what a man did, but the way in which he did it, when it sprang up in his heart to do it. I want to know all about the days of adversity or sunshine in which he was schooled, I want to know about the boy as well as the man. Facts, naked facts, are not history, they are but the oil and brushes, and when you have them an artist must come along to work you up an historical picture."

Soon after the negotiation of the Ashburton treaty, I was in the State Department, sitting with Mr. Webster, when a Massachusetts gentleman, who had long been in Europe, came in to pay his respects to the Secretary. Alluding to the

treaty, he expressed the deep sense of obligation, which Americans abroad felt for his eminent services in preserving the peace of the country. Mr. Webster thanked him for his kind remarks, and then said.—"Sir, there have been many occasions, while sitting at this table, when I could, by the motion of my hand, have lighted up a war; but sir, my duty was perfectly plain. I had only to remember that I was negotiating for a christian people, with a christian people, and that we were living in the nineteenth century of the christian era." Mr. Webster never uttered a nobler sentiment.

Two years ago, at the dinner table at the Revere House, in Boston, and several friends around the board, a remark was made by one respecting the poetry of the Old Testament. Mr. Webster immediately remarked, "ah, my friend, the poetry of Isaiah and Job, and Habbakuk is beautiful indeed, but when you reach your 69th year, you will give more for the 14th or 17th chapter of John's gospel, or for one of the Epistles, than for all the poetry of the Bible." Mr. Webster then said to me, "Sir, I deeply regret that I have never recorded my opinion of God's Word in some public manner." He then stated that he had declined speaking at Bible Societies, from fear that the motives prompting to such a step would be regarded as sinister. I named the American Bible Society's Anniversary as a suitable occasion, and he declared that if he was invited to speak, he would embrace the opportunity with pleasure. The clergyman to whom I made the suggestion, soon slept in death. The glorious testimony in favor of christianity, which closed the inaugural speech of Gen. Harrison, was placed there at the request of his Secretary of State.

I once asked Mr. Webster his opinion of the Oxford Tracts. "Sir, I have looked at them, but feel very little interest in the subject. It is a simple point, in my view, to be decided. Does christianity support the church, or does the church support christianity? I go for the plain, old-fashioned congregational form, but I love to meet with the church of God wherever I find it; and so I commune with my own church at Marsh-

field, and with Presbyterians or Episcopalians, as I may happen to find them."

I think the sentiments embodied in a conversation which I had with Mr. Webster, at Washington, previous to my visit to Europe in 1851, are worthy of record. "Well sir, I notice from your letter for Passports, that you take three of your pupils. I am glad that they are going. You will teach them things abroad which will be useful to them when they return. Show them the great farms, the noble stock; let them see the rural life of England, and learn to love it. We want to have more love for the country. We want more beauty thrown around our houses, and the lads will come home with better taste. Try to cultivate their memories as to the localities of England. Let them never forget the places sacred to liberty. The tower is a perfect study, it requires thought, it is no place to be despatched in a hurried visit. It is history, sir. Westminster Abbey is a wonderful place, not only for what it is, but for what it is not. Smithfield, too, is full of glory. If ever Jacob's ladder rested upon earth, it was there, where bloody Mary made it the gate to heaven for so many martyrs. Bunhill fields; I was too good a Puritan not to go there. I wanted to stand where Bunyan, Owen, Goodwin and Defoe were buried. I should like to stand at the graves of all the great men of England. This journey will do the lads great good; it will furnish them matter for thought in future life, and if they improve this opportunity, it will teach them what so few understand, how to grow old decently. An ignorant, uncultivated old man is a poor affair; the tailor can pad out his wasted form, but nothing except early acquirements and good sentiments can make fine old age. You will see 'the Duke' sir, he is the most remarkable man in the country; so practical, such sterling sense, so self-reliant; a man is nothing, nothing, who does not depend upon himself. I shall give you letters, sir, addressed to men I value highly, who are ornaments to our nature. Pray make the lads notice the attention paid in England to age and position, no where can the propri-

eties of life be learned so well. What a destiny lies before these two countries, England and the United States; the same language, laws, and religion. Did you ever think of the wonderful concealment of America from Europe, till 'the set time' had arrived for its revelation?"

For many years, in common with other friends, I had urged upon Mr. Webster, the performance of a work which we feared he might delay too long,—the publication of his own works, revised under his own eye. Although solicitous to accomplish this object, there were impediments in his way. In Oct. 1850, Mr. Webster honored me with a telegraphic message to meet him in Boston, and placed in my hands a commission to purchase the copy-right of his works, which had for years been in the hands of publishers. I shall never forget the grasp of his hand when I announced the extinction of the copy-right, nor the hearty expression, "thank God that I own my own works."

Mr. Webster, in numerous conversations which occurred in a series of years, made remarks and dropped opinions, which I thought deserved preservation, and I trust that I am not guilty of any impropriety in placing a few of them upon record. And here I rejoice to state, that in all the interviews which I had the happiness and honor to enjoy with this great man, I cannot remember that I ever heard him utter an unkind, acrimonious, or uncharitable remark upon any man. Once, when a gentleman had named some violent censures heaped upon him in his public character, Mr. Webster calmly replied, "Perhaps my calumniator's misfortunes have soured his temperament, for I remember him a very kindly disposed person; we must make allowances for the infirmities of age." The provocation had been very great, and his motives had been wantonly assailed, yet his considerate and magnanimous spirit triumphed nobly upon this occasion.*

* Perhaps it is impossible to place Mr. Webster's true nobility of heart, and his forgiving spirit in a more striking light, than by the publication of the following letter:—

Letter from Mr. Webster to Senator Dickinson.—The Binghamton Republican publishes the following interesting letter, addressed by Mr. Webster to Mr. Dickinson, just as Mr.

On one occasion Mr. Webster remarked, "When I was in England I was greatly pleased with the wall flower, so often seen upon the walls of ruins and decaying buildings. The country people call it the bloody wall flower. I seldom picked this sweet scented flower without thinking of the hopes and wishes of life—the best and sweetest of my life, all surrounded with ruin and decay, still we must look out for the blossoms of hope."

"I have been reading White's Selbourne once more. What moral beauty there was in White's mind! How he revelled in quiet country life; and when he became deaf, and could no longer hear the birds sing, yet he thanks God that his eyesight is still quick and good."

Walking in the evening at Marshfield, and gazing at the sea, Mr. Webster stopped, and placing his hand upon my shoulder, recited several verses of Mrs. Hemans' beautiful poem on the Sound of the Sea.—

Webster was leaving the Senate to take his place as Secretary of State. Its allusion to painful occurrences in the past, is the charge brought by Mr. Dickinson against Mr. Webster, in regard to the Ashburton treaty, and to the strong language in which they were repelled:

"Washington, Sept. 27, 1850.

My Dear Sir: Our companionship in the Senate is dissolved. After this long and most important session, you are about to return to your home, and I shall try to find leisure to visit mine. I hope we may meet each other again two months hence, for the discharge of our duties in our respective stations in the government. But life is uncertain, and I have not felt willing to take leave of you, without placing in your hands a note containing a very few words which I wish to say to you.

In the earlier part of our acquaintance, my dear sir, occurrences took place which I remember with constantly increasing regret and pain, because the more I have known of you, the greater have been my esteem for your character, and my respect for your talents. But it is your noble, able, manly, and patriotic conduct in support of the great measure of this session, which has entirely won my heart, and secured my highest regard; I hope you may live long to serve your country; but I do not think you are ever likely to see a crisis in which you may be able to do so much, either for your own distinction, or the public good. You have stood where others have fallen; you have advanced with firm and manly step, where others have wavered, faltered, and fallen back; and for one I desire to thank you, and to commend your conduct, out of the fullness of an honest heart.

This letter needs no reply; it is, I am aware, of very little value; but I have thought you might be willing to receive it, and, perhaps, to leave it where it would be seen by those who shall come after you. I pray you, when you reach your own threshold, to remember me most kindly to your wife and daughter.

I remain, my dear sir, with the truest esteem, your friend obedient servant,

Daniel Webster.

Hon. Daniel S. Dickinson, U. S. Senate

"Thou art sounding on, thou mighty sea,
For ever and the same;
The ancient rocks yet ring to thee,
Whose thunders nought can tame.

Oh, many a glorious voice is gone
From the rich bowers of earth,
And hush'd is many a lovely one
Of mournfulness or mirth.

But thou art swelling on, thou deep!
Through many an olden clime,
Thy billowy anthems ne'er to sleep,
Until the close of time.

Dining with a few friends at the Samoset House, in Plymouth, Mr. Webster expressed his surprise "that none of our best writers had made Plymouth Rock and its Pilgrim Colony, the subject of a great poem, or the ground-work of a noble fiction. The greatness of the deeds connected with the place is no reason why fancy should not go to work. The materials are fine for a great fiction. There is Willis, who has written some of the most beautiful things in our language, he should have made this a love affair and gone at it." When some one questioned the high estimate just given of Mr. Willis, Mr. Webster quoted the poem on "Hagar in the Wilderness," and said, "Where can we find any thing better, my friend?"

Upon one occasion during the present year, Mr. Webster said of some true-hearted men, "These have been with me in my tribulation. Job, sir, well understood human nature, he speaks of some of his friends as running brooks."

I once asked Mr. Webster what speeches of the great men of the age he most admired. He replied, "Mirabeau's on National Bankruptcy: Canning's, upon the South American Independence, and the affairs of Portugal; and Sir Robert Peel's, on retiring from office, are all favorites with me."

When History was once the subject of conversation, Mr. Webster remarked, that "he did not think it was as well taught as other subjects in education. I would teach a boy

Roman History, with very many notes and annotations. A lad should be made to know that Rome was a highwayman, and principally admired because so successful. The whole history of Rome is one of crime. We, as a people, ought to study the history of Rome, very thoughtfully."

On one occasion, a Boston gentleman was talking to Mr. Webster, respecting the best way to educate his son in the city. "Sir, I would send him to the public school." But an objection was made that there was a great admixture of boys, and evils to be apprehended from so many foreigners, &c. Mr. Webster replied, "Sir, send your son to the public school, and if he sits by an Irish boy, they will both, perhaps, be better for the association. I am strongly in favor of public schools."

In relation to Education Societies, Mr. Webster had doubts as to their expediency and efficacy. He thought that in New England, a man who had the root of the matter in him, would secure a theological education; and he expressed his fear, that the system so much in vogue, was calculated to lower the character of the ministry in point of talent, and make it less independent."

I should disgrace my office as a minister of the Gospel, if I were to give any currency to the fatal opinion, that we are to regard faithful public services, in the light of a commutation for personal piety. No man has more sternly rebuked this fallacy than the lamented patriot whose death we deplore.

How different is the death of Webster, acknowledging his guilt, and asking for pardon through Jesus Christ, to that of Lord Nelson, declaring with his dying breath that he was "not a great sinner." How glorious was the scene at Marshfield, when compared with the circumstances of the great unbeliever of the last century. Bolingbroke, gifted with every talent that distinguishes a man, a commanding intellect, a glowing imagination, and a captivating eloquence, wanting nothing but a sense of religion. On seeing a friend in the

agonies of death, he exclaimed, "It is hardly worth while to be here at all."

I wish to hold up Daniel Webster to the attention of the young. Remember that he was a New England farmer's boy. In early boyhood, he had fewer advantages than you possess at the present day; but he worked hard, he improved his time, and laid in early life the foundation of his fame. Read his life, my young friends, and let all the anecdotes of his boyhood pass into your recollections, as a type of that peculiar training which has raised up so many great good men in our country.

It is a very striking fact that so many of our great men have recently passed away, while yet "in the harness" of public life. Clinton, Harrison, Adams, Calhoun, Woodbury, Clay, and Webster, each at his post when the summons came crying, "give an account of thy stewardship." Surely, my hearers, we are taught a lesson, and have matter for solemn reflection.

Who shall fill these places we cannot tell. One thing is certain, that men of their strength and stature, we are not soon likely to see again. And yet the mighty God, "who fainteth not neither is weary," can give his spirit of wisdom and understanding to others, as he did to our deceased patriot. Let us not despair of our beloved land. To do so would be ingratitude to the God who was with our fathers, and "led them by the right way." I pray you my fellow citizens, let us not make an arm of flesh our trust, and let us learn to look less to the creature, and more to the Creator. God is at no loss to save and bless a country to which he has a favor. Moses and Joshua, Othniel and Ehud, Gideon and Samuel, and David, were all raised up for the welfare of Israel; and when God would bless our father land, he brought out Alfred and Cromwell as terrors to our foes; and when he would break the fatal yoke of Popery in Europe, he brought forth Luther, and Calvin, and Knox; and when our country was in danger, he gave us Washington to lay the foundation of our Constitution,

and then he gave us Webster to defend it. And as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. AMEN.

"Duncan is in his grave:
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well.
Treason has done its worst; nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
Can touch him further."

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